

## OPEN LETTERS.

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### A READY SUPPLY OF VAUCHERIA.

TEACHERS of botany are often put to much trouble in securing good fruiting material of the stock algæ at times of the year when material cannot be obtained out of doors. A good supply of *Vaucheria* can be obtained at any time with very little trouble. Five or six weeks before the material is needed some *Vaucheria* should be obtained in any greenhouse from the surface of the soil of potted plants, and brought to the laboratory without disturbing the mats. After removing as much of the soil as possible the mats should be thrown into a jar half full of water and put where the sun may shine upon them. In the experiments made it was found that after a week considerable change in the color of the filaments had occurred, and after five or six weeks the material was found in excellent condition, showing both methods of reproduction, zoospores in all stages of germination, and the vegetative body also thriving better than if grown on soil. In this way a supply free from other algæ and from sand, and in amounts sufficient to supply classes of over two hundred students, was obtained at short notice. The species experimented with was *Vaucheria sessilis*.—BRUNO A. GOLDBERGER, *Chicago*.

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### STAINING TECHNIQUE.

BASIC fuchsin (1 per cent. aqueous solution) can be very satisfactorily substituted for safranin in the Flemming triple stain, and at least in many cases gives a more brilliant red. The same elements seem to take the fuchsin as take the safranin. The stain goes through the same manipulations, clearing, etc., as are used with the Flemming combination, without visible alteration. Slides are best left in the fuchsin over night and excess extracted with 35 per cent. alcohol. This extraction is slow enough to be easily controlled.—H. F. ROBERTS, *The University of Chicago*.